

MEMORIAL  
OF THE  
LEGISLATURE OF ARKANSAS,  
IN RELATION TO  
*The Public Lands.*

FEBRUARY 5, 1849.

Referred to the Committee on Public Lands, and ordered to be printed.

*To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:*

Your memorialist, the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas, would respectfully pray your honorable body to donate in the States in which they lie, for the purposes of education and internal improvement, one-tenth of all your unappropriated lands, to be disposed of and used in such manner as the legislature of each State shall deem best calculated to promote and carry out these desirable objects; also, that you will grant to this State the right of locating the five per cent. fund in land instead of receiving it in money; also, that you will reduce the price of your government lands. In asking the reduction of the price of the public domain we would state, as our opinion, that the interest of the State and general government alike demand that the prices of the public lands be graduated; taking the past sales as our criterion we find, with the exception of a few years, that the average price of the lands sold at public sale has been but a little over one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, barely sufficient to pay the extra expenses of advertising, selling and soforth. Now when it is recollected that these are the choice lands, both as regard fertility and locality, is it to be expected that the inferior lands, possessing no local advantages, should bring the maximum price; and we know of no better way of classing their value than by the time they have been in market. And we would respectfully suggest the propriety of reducing the price of your public lands twenty-five cents per acre for every five years they have been in market, until they have been twenty-five years in market, and then to be ceded to the States in which they lie; and we would further recommend that the reduction be accompanied with a liberal prospective pre-emption law. In asking the five per cent. fund in lands instead of money, which you have stipulated shall be paid to us at some future day, we would state that it would be of incalculable advantage to the State, and would enable her to open roads and canals and soforth, by which the general government would realize the great and important advantages contemplated in the grant much sooner than she would under your present policy. In asking an addi-

tional sum of five per cent. of all your unappropriated lands, for internal improvement, your petitioners are of opinion, that it would enable the States to make such permanent and valuable improvements as would insure the realization to the general government of a greater sum for the remaining nineteen-twentieths than she can from the whole under the present policy. In asking the five per cent. for school purposes, we would state, as our opinion, that a large portion of the amount, saved by this fund for school purposes would be invested in lands which, with the additional value given to the remaining lands by the donation, would soon completely reimburse the general government for all her munificence, given to educate those who are in a few years to take charge of this great and growing government. In conclusion, your memorialist would beg leave to add, that they entertain the most abiding confidence in your disposition to give to each subject that attention and consideration which its importance demands.

And your memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray, and soforth.

M. W. IZARD,

*Speaker pro tem. of the House of Representatives.*

M. C. BYRD,

*President of the Senate.*

Approved January 10, 1849.

JOHN S. DUNN.

A true copy from the original.

D. B. GREER,

*Secretary of State.*